

ADOT PREDESIGN FORUM

MEETING MINUTES

by

Jackie Noblitt, P.E., Stanley Consultants

February 9, 2006

1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

ADOT Phoenix Maintenance Conference Room

Welcome

Vince Li welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced the new Predesign on-call project managers/representatives, including Brian Kinney with Carter Burgess, Darryl Truitt with EPS, Dewey Brown with PBQD, and Dale Wiggins with URS. Vince considers the on-call consultants as an extension of Predesign staff.

Mr. Li then went on to introduce the new hires from Predesign, including Kamal Ahmed, Javier Gurrola, Victor Yang, Shahid Bhuiyan, and Baljeet Chawla.

NEPA Questions

Steve Thomas was unable to attend today's meeting. Questions for him and NEPA issues for a future Predesign Forum are welcome.

Vince Li answered several questions regarding the NEPA process:

Q: When will an environmental overview be required versus a categorical exclusion? When will an EA be required and what triggers an EIS?

A: It's up to the study team to decide what level of documentation and environmental clearance is required for each project. The simplest document for each given situation should be prepared.

If the predesign product is a scoping letter, the environmental documentation will normally be prepared during final design. The schedule for a SL is typically six months.

If a project assessment is required, a categorical exclusion will normally be prepared. The clearance can be issued at the Predesign stage or during final design.

The difference between an EA and EIS usually depends on whether the project results in significant impacts. The team should build consensus and seek expert advice.

An EEG environmental planner may be assigned full time to Predesign projects.

Steve Thomas' presentation will be rescheduled. The group was encouraged to submit NEPA process questions for Steve.

AASHTO Process/Design Variances/Exceptions

Herman Mozart with Aztec is working with Predesign to review the AASHTO process. He is looking at the 2004 edition versus earlier versions of the Green Book. ADOT is currently transitioning from the 1990 to the 2004 Green Book. The two major differences between the 1990 and 2004 Green books relate to stopping sight distance (friction dependent to deceleration dependent) and crest vertical curves (object height increased from 0.5' to 2', which increases the existing sight distance on crest vertical curves).

There are several pending changes to the review process:

1. The review speed will be changed from the minimum design speed to the posted speed.
2. Horizontal curve existing superelevation will be evaluated instead of the design superelevation, comparing the existing superelevation to the minimum superelevation calculated by AASHTO Method 2, leading to a smaller required e . The posted speed will be used for evaluation.
3. Only National Highway System roadways will be reviewed. Other non-NHS roadways may be reviewed by criteria to be determined, e.g., if there are accident problems or if the District Engineer requests a review.

Herman is revising the AASHTO guidelines and the horizontal and vertical curve programs. The new HC software will calculate horizontal stopping sight distances and will account for effective grade.

ADOT RDG superelevation is currently calculated using AASHTO Method 5. Method 2 more closely approximates ball banking readings and driver comfort.

Herman contacted twelve other states regarding their AASHTO evaluation requirements. Two states don't perform AASHTO evaluations, two states evaluate NHS roadways only, and one state evaluates only the shoulder on non-NHS roadways. Most states do not perform an accident review.

FHWA has not yet adopted the 2005 Interstate standards. It was noted that the current standards (1991) don't go up to 75 mph. In these cases, designers should use the freeway values in the Green Book.

The timing of the changes has not yet been determined. FHWA has not yet agreed to ADOT's proposed changes in process. Advice/comments to Predesign are welcome. For now, ADOT will use the 1990 Green Book and minimum design speed for AASHTO evaluations. The changes will be implemented soon.

The new programs will be posted on the Predesign web site after beta testing is complete.

Project Showcase (HOV Lane Study)

Steve Wilcox with DMJM Harris presented the HOV studies for State Route 51 and State Route 101. The Regional Transportation Plan is heavily front-end loaded with HOV projects, partially to support the bus rapid transit system.

The two DCR's and Categorical Exclusions were prepared to address the addition of HOV lanes for six miles on State Route 51 from Shea to Loop 101 and for 30 miles on SR 101L from Princess to Loop 202. A N-E/S-W HOV connection/directional ramp will be provided from SR 51 to Loop 101.

The study recommended construction of the HOV lanes by removing the AC shoulder, extending concrete pavement to the median, and adding concrete median barrier to replace cable barriers. Lighting will be moved to the median and will be designed to accommodate the future general purpose lanes.

Noise evaluations were prepared using the TNM model and also included future general purpose lanes.

The programmed amount for the SR 51 project was \$48 million; the current estimate is \$64 million. Construction of the HOV projects is planned for 2007-2011. FMS will be implemented as well. The projects are now under final design by Stanley, Aztec, and Jacobs.

Predesign Portal

Stanley Soesilo with PPMS discussed the Predesign Portal. Electronic documents for many projects have been uploaded to the system. Currently, only ADOT staff has access to the documents; however, Predesign plans to provide a walk-up machine for consultants. Consultant access will be arranged by Marta Raiford or Candice Orona. Searches for information use filters for selection criteria such as route, district, county, and milepost.

For now, only PDF files are being loaded to the portal. In the future, Predesign will accept other kinds of files if storage space is not a concern. The Predesign project manager selects the documents to be included. Schedule information for projects is also available on the portal. In the future, there will be links to other ADOT software, including E2C2.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date has not been determined. Ideas for future Predesign Forums are welcome.

Attachments: Agenda, sign-in sheets

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PREDESIGN SECTION

Predesign Forum

February 9, 2006

1:30 – 3:30

Phoenix Maintenance Conference Room

AGENDA

Introductions	(ALL)
Welcome	(Vince Li)
Question regarding NEPA	(Steve Thomas)
AASHTO/Design Variances / Exceptions	(Herman Mozart)
Project Showcase (HOV Lane Study)	(Steve Wilcox)
Predesign Portal	(Stanley Soesilo)
Other Items	
Next Meeting	
Meeting Minutes – Jackie Noblitt, Stanley	
Refreshments - Natalya Hyland, AMEC	

SIGN-IN SHEET

FOR ROADWAY PREDESIGN FORUM

02/09/2006

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SIGN-IN SHEET FOR ROADWAY PREDESIGN FORUM #4 02/09/2006

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